Reviewer’s report

Title: The Role of Institutions in the Effectiveness of Malaria Treatment in the Ghanaian Health Sector

Version: 5 Date: 12 July 2014

Reviewer: Beth Rachlis

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Major Compulsory Revisions
1. Page 5, 2nd paragraph: Recruitment: Please be explicit and confirm how the investigators knew who to recruit. That is, did they obtain the information from medical records and then try to find them through a phone call or a home visit, based on the data on contact location in the medical records? How did they know who to approach in public places?

Minor essential revisions
3. 2nd sentence, 2nd paragraph: When institutions are “right”…not clear what this means…do you mean functioning properly, are accountable? Please expand.
4. 3rd paragraph: 2nd sentence: This sentence is written in an awkward way and is a bit of a run on sentence. Please revise.
5. Section 1.1 (page 3): first sentence…add “s” to relationship so it should read “institutional relationships”… Edit first sentence, it is too long and should be revised for clarity.
6. Reference definition of decentralization
7. Section: 2.1 (page 4, 1st sentence): Remove “the” in the sentence between “Ghana’s” and “ten” so it should read “The survey data used….in three of Ghana’s ten administrative regions…. “.
8. Page. 5, last paragraph, 3rd sentence: In general, hundred patients…." Is it one hundred? Add the correct qualifier here.
9. Page 6, last paragraph,2nd sentence: add an “s” to outcomes…i.e., “, older patients were expected to have poorer outcomes than the young patients….”
10. Page 8, 2nd paragraph, 3rd sentence: Revise sentence to read: “All these factors were expected to have a positive effect…. “
11. Move the following sentences from the results to the discussion sections:
   - page 10, 3rd paragraph, 4th sentence: “Thus it is possible that patients from….”
   - page 11, first paragraph, sentence beginning with “Given that the teaching hospital represents…. “
12. Page 11, first paragraph of discussion section: Move the discussion around the validity of self-reported data to limitations section.

13. Begin the discussion section with a summary of the key findings (i.e., this should be the first paragraph in the discussion section).

14. Page 12, last paragraph: What does ethnolinguistic fractionalization mean? This needs to be defined particularly in relation to the findings of the present study.

15. Page 13, 1st line: Add a comma after malaria so sentence should read…”…in order to provide effective treatment of malaria, the facility….”

16. Page 13 (section 3.2): Add an “s” to Limitation heading (i.e., Limitations)-move discussion from -first paragraph of discussion to this section. Other limitations: self-report data, other factors not measured including income, length of training for doctors/nurses, generalizability to other settings, other unmeasured confounders etc….

17. Page 13 (section 4.0): Add “s” to Conclusion (i.e., Conclusions)

18. Table 1: Add total sample size to the title: i.e., “Table 1: Characteristics of study participants and facilities (n=….)”

19. Rename the title in Table 3 to be more informative. For example, patient characteristics, facility characteristics and institutional factors associated with treatment effectiveness.

Discretionary Revisions: can ignore

20. Page 4: Last paragraph before method, 1st sentence…”even though studies have examined…” These studies should be referenced OR if it is only one study (reference 13), then the sentence should read, one study instead of studies.

21. If the authors need to reduce word count, the last paragraph before the methods could be reduced or removed.

22. In discussion with number of nurses and doctors (2nd paragraph in discussion): it may be that is not just the number of doctors/nurses but also the type of training they have had or how long they have been working in their respective fields. This could be added as a limitation of the study- given that this may play a role.

23. Page 13, 2nd sentence: This sentence could be qualified by the findings of the present study or at least be restated to something like: “based on the findings of this study, in our setting, it may be that such information flow is more capable…..” As this may not be the case in other studies/settings.

24. Page 13, last sentence of 1st paragraph: Last sentence: the issue of job satisfaction is still important regardless of treatment effectiveness…if people are not satisfied with their job, they may leave in and settings like Ghana, there may be an outflow of health care workers to other settings…so this still needs to be addressed in the future.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests